

**California Workforce Investment Board
State Youth Council (SYC)
August 26, 2003 Meeting Summary**

State Youth Council Members

Bonnie Armstrong
Jorge Ayala, Chair
Rita Cepeda
Bernard Davitto
Alex Gaytan
Myeshia Grice, Vice Chair

Mark Hanson
Valerie Leland
Milbrey McLaughlin
David Rattray
Dorothy Thompson
Carlos Lopez, delegate for Hermalinda Sapien

Program Staff:

Paul Gussman
ZoAnn Laurente
Megan Juring
Margaret Mack
John Merris-Coots

Cathe Rutherford
Suzette Smith
Tina Arce
Robert Padilla

Welcome and Opening Remarks

After a brief welcome, Dr. Jorge Ayala, SYC Chair, introduced new council members Ms. Bonnie Armstrong (Senior Fellow, Foundation Consortium for California's Children & Youth) and Mr. Peter Gregerson (Director, Sacramento Job Corps Center). Ms. Armstrong and Mr. Gregerson further elaborated on their background and current positions. Dr. Ayala then invited all members of the audience to introduce themselves as well.

Dr. Ayala noted that due to state budget restrictions, future Council meetings will be held at state facilities such as the East End Complex as no charges are incurred for their use. He also commented that there would be breakout meetings after lunch, in different rooms.

Program Updates

California Workforce Investment Board (State Board): Mr. Paul Gussman, State Board Deputy Director, assured the members that the State Board supports the SYC, especially in these trying times. He stated that the work of the Council is vital and critical to the State Board's mission and that this work will continue. A key point mentioned was the national recognition that California's State Youth Council has received. Mr. Gussman also alerted the group that they could expect a copy of the State Board's *50 Youth Stories* soon. He then informed the Council that he had attended the recent National Governors Association conference in New York City. During that meeting, there was much discussion of WIA reauthorization activities in Washington, DC. Key points included:

- Reauthorization is on a 'fast track' in the Senate.
- The anticipated turnaround time for a new Senate version of the bill to be forwarded to the Conference Committee is mid-September 2003.

- The current House version of the bill proposes a funding allocation formula of 70 percent for out-of-school youth, and 30 percent for in-school youth. Interim discussions have included a proposed change to 60 percent for in-school youth and 40 percent for out-of-school youth. The Senate version is not out yet, but most watchers will hold comment and wait until the new mark-up of the bill comes out.

Mr. Gussman said that the state budget had finally been passed and the California Department of Education (CDE) did well in light of the overall state budget deficit. He also announced that John Merris-Coots is returning to CDE, and presented him with a plaque and coffee mug in appreciation of his outstanding work for the State Board and the SYC. Mr. Gussman stated that Mr. Merris-Coots was responsible for “pulling it all together” and translating the ideas into policy and practice with the creation of the Council. Mr. Gussman also provided members with copies of the newly published Career Planning Guide from the California Resource Network (CalCRN). Finally, Mr. Gussman announced that the State Board has been awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to assist youth with disabilities in gaining greater access to workforce development resources and services.

Public Comments

Dr. Ayala acknowledged the presence of Mr. Matt McKinnon, Deputy Undersecretary of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA), and Lori Fujimoto, LWDA liaison, in the audience, and invited Mr. McKinnon to address the Council. Mr. McKinnon gave some background on the new Labor Agency and stated that the Agency’s focus is to raise issues of concern to the working people in California. He also stated that the LWDA’s activities are driven by the budget, and that an ongoing budget review process is now in place to assess the impact of workforce cuts. Also, Mr. McKinnon said, the LWDA administration is exploring ways in which the various agencies comprising the LWDA can work together more effectively. The LWDA is aware that federal and state cuts in workforce funding have been significant in the last three years, and that there is a need to establish clear priorities for available funds. With 1.2 million Californians out of work, the LWDA is prioritizing its spending plans, and is working to ensure continued funding for the State Youth Council, which receives a high level of respect. Mr. McKinnon also mentioned the Governor’s priorities, including Technology to Teaching, the Nurse Workforce Initiative (NWI), and the Life Sciences Initiative, which reflects the bright future expected for the biotech industry. The LWDA’s ongoing budget review process assures that the State Board will be consulted about grant requests, with weekly meetings and regular consultation between LWDA and State Board staff on a range of issues, including:

- Ensuring that policy and fiscal concerns are addressed in a collaborative fashion;
- Exploring new ways to encourage collaboration in One-Stops, apprenticeships and the NWI;
- Looking at apprenticeships that move youth into work; and
- Finding the best way to establish and market a statewide One-Stop system, where clients can expect the same services at different One-Stops across the state (a process known as “branding”).

Mr. McKinnon also noted that, as we look at California's youth population, we must recognize its racial and language diversity and the challenges we face in that regard. Historically, there has been a lack of diversity in apprenticeship programs, but we are beginning to see great success with new initiatives such as "Youth Build" (he cited a collaborative pilot project between the Kaiser Permanente Health Plan and Service Employees International Union Local 250) and within the NWI. Finally, Mr. McKinnon mentioned the need to raise the visibility of the system to build a presence and to defend the One-Stop system at the federal level.

Questions from Council members to Matt McKinnon:

Q: Regarding career ladder programs and health care sectors, are we looking into other areas where there are high growth industries?

A: The State Board is working on ways to analyze where high growth is occurring (as part of its Regional Economies Project). We are also looking for ways to work with community colleges (as part of the NWI, as an example) in areas of expanding industries. Mr. McKinnon also noted that, through his participation with the California Community Colleges' Economic Development Program Advisory Committee, the industries of advanced manufacturing and advanced transportation might be areas of potential focus.

Q: There was a general inquiry regarding "branding" One-Stops and marketing.

A: Initially, the LWDA will study how to reach out to local boards in the 2004-05 budget year. However, there may be limited funds available for marketing, and Mr. McKinnon didn't want to mislead by suggesting there would be a high allocation of funds. We need to think about how to tailor workforce initiatives to specific funds. He also suggested that we not lose sight of existing programs where name recognition is already high.

Q: What about workers' compensation rates for youth involved in apprenticeships?

A: The workers' compensation discussion could not be at a higher pitch. There are discussions regarding establishing different benefits for young workers, or the same benefits offered at different rates for apprenticeships.

Q: Is there discussion regarding differentials in unemployment insurance benefits for youth?

A: Mr. McKinnon agreed to raise the issue, but first wished to give it more thought.

April 30, 2003 Minutes

The minutes of the April 30, 2003, meetings were approved by consensus of the committee.

SYC Staff Update:

Mr. Merris-Coots provided a number of staff updates. With regard to the meeting location, he encouraged council members to suggest additional ideas for meeting facilities and the logistics involved. A comment from the SYC suggested that future meetings be held in a different room or have a different setup because the large auditorium setting was not conducive to the SYC being able to work as a committee of the whole. Mr. Merris-Coots said that staff would work to provide a friendlier format for the next meeting, but that the Council is necessarily limited to

public facilities available at no cost. From the audience, Mr. McKinnon offered to help obtain facilities in the California Environmental Protection Agency building for future Council meetings.

By means of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Merris-Coots and Ms. Lois Ann Porter provided updates on SYC and Youth Council Institute (YCi) activities since April 2003. These include tracking the work of the SYC and its work groups by utilizing the expertise and experience of the Forum for Youth Investment (FYI), and by developing a scope of work to implement the Comprehensive Plan and Campaign for California's Youth.

Mr. Merris-Coots provided crucial context to Council members by enumerating the SYC's accomplishments in 2002-03, such as establishing the Youth Voice Network and adding representatives of the Foundation Consortium, Sacramento Job Corps, San Diego/Imperial County Labor Councils and California Association of Student Councils to the Council. The SYC, in cooperation with the California Workforce Association (CWA), strongly supported the development of the State Board's *50 Youth Stories*, and participated in planning activities for the California Youth Development Summit. The SYC supported the completion of California's policy on additional assistance to areas with high concentrations of WIA-eligible youth, encouraged resource mapping for local youth councils, and linked the California Coalition for Youth (CCY) Crisis Line with those areas. The Council helped distribute CCY Crisis Line materials to all 50 local areas and submitted recommendations in response to the administration's initial WIA reauthorization proposals. SYC staff have participated in the Governor's Foster Youth Initiative, Communities and Schools for Career Success, California Career Resources Network, the ACSA/CCSESA School-to-Career Task Force, DOL State and Regional coordination meetings, the National Youth Employment Coalition, the Governor's Youth Leadership Forum for Youth with Disabilities, CWA's Annual Youth Conference, the CCY Conference held in conjunction with the Youth Voice Network, and the School-to-Career Academy.

Ms. Porter affirmed that the creation of the State Youth Council, and its adoption by the State Board and local youth councils, could not have been achieved without the hard work of Mr. Merris-Coots.

Architect of Change Award: Ms. Porter apprised the Council of YCi's having received a DOL Architect of Change (AOC) Award, adding that the award ceremony will take place possibly in November, but in any case sometime during the fall. The AOC Award acknowledges YCi's All Youth-One System as the only statewide capacity-building initiative in the nation that is focused on supporting broad and visionary objectives for youth councils. The Award, given for excellence in customer service, includes a \$25,000 grant. Ms. Porter stated that YCi has done a lot of research, and although practitioners are encouraged to take YCi to the next level, there is a need to improve efforts to implement the All Youth-One System framework. She stated that the All Youth-One System concept has been adopted at the community level, that networks are being established, and that YCi is bringing more people together on collaborations. She also stated that all YCi research is field-driven and that YCi's information search capacities are working well (for example, the last information search received over 100 responses), and, as a

result, YCi policy development efforts are becoming a two-way street – from the field to decision makers and vice versa.

Youth Funding Matrix: Ms. Porter provided a draft of the YCi State Youth Funding matrix, which identifies different types of public and private funding streams for youth programs and services coming into California. She said that the handout is still in draft form but that it is a first attempt to identify competitive or formula funds available to youth service providers, with a bibliography of contact information and guidance on how to access the funds. She encouraged Council members to review the draft, identify missing and/or redundant data, and provide feedback to her so that the matrix can be finalized.

The Council and SYC staff thanked Ms. Porter for her work. Mr. Gussman stated that this is one of the first attempts in the nation to map resources, and that YCi can serve as a model for the entire U.S. He noted that due to ever-shrinking federal resources, future funding would require intelligent and strategic leveraging. He recommended a system approach as opposed to a categorical programs approach in addressing youth issues. He further commented that there are DOL funds available that bypass the state and go directly to local agencies, and that resource mapping has far-reaching implications for sharing that type of information with local youth program service providers.

Youth Voice Network: Ms. Valerie Leland and Mr. Alex Gaytan pointed to the state's budget crisis as a primary barrier to convening a Youth Voice Network (YVN) meeting. However, there have been many telephone calls among staff, Council members, and youth to brainstorm ideas for advancing the YVN's work since its March 29, 2003, meeting. While maintaining contact with youth during this time can be a frustrating challenge, Ms. Leland asserted the need to focus on staying connected with those youth who attended the March meeting and placing a priority on communication and continuity. While thanking the State Board and the SYC for their support and sponsorship, Ms. Leland said it is essential to make sure youth know they have a platform where they can be heard.

Ms. Leland mentioned that issues arising from the March 29 YVN meeting will be incorporated into the SYC work plan. The challenge will be to filter those issues into the existing objectives and assign them to the appropriate work groups. The issues and strategies are detailed in the YVN final report on file with the State Board staff. Both Ms. Leland and Mr. Gaytan emphasized the need to validate the work done by youth by incorporating it into the SYC work plan.

Council members concurred in supporting the work of these youths, and agreed that their input is of significant value to the Council. The members also agreed with the need to move forward on the youth recommendations, and expressed their appreciation to Ms. Leland and Mr. Gaytan for their advocacy and involvement.

Mr. McKinnon explained that the LWDA is exploring the possibility of establishing a youth portal into its database and acknowledged the need for it to be youth-friendly. The link will address the work-related rights of younger workers, such as wage/hour regulations, prohibitions against sexual harassment, etc. Mr. Steve Trippe mentioned a few Web sites used by New Ways

to Work and the School-to-Career Clearinghouse that also address teen health and safety issues. Ms. Rita Cepeda added that community colleges have career education centers that assist programs for intern placement and educational opportunities, and emphasized the need to add collaboration with those resources to the SYC work plan.

Leadership Team Report: On July 11, 2003, the Leadership Team met to assess the current status of the State Youth Council's work and to prepare for the August SYC meeting. Key issues for discussion were:

- Determining how best to align and support the Council's work for 2003-04;
- Developing strategies and systems to assure youth participation in all Council work groups;
- Folding all existing objectives into a consolidated work plan;
- Developing strategies and a structure to ensure broad member participation on Council work groups;
- Maintaining the Council's resolve to work for long term systems change while addressing the immediate needs of youth through state and local policy and action.

The Leadership Team is recommending that we focus our work through two work groups, one focused on issues and initiatives at the state level and one focused on building the capacity of local Youth Councils. The major objectives of both groups call first for effectively aligning the work of the SYC, leading to policy recommendations. Secondly, both work groups should ensure youth involvement. This will allow the Council to continue to address our current priorities of system development, responding to immediate critical needs, involving youth in policy development at the state and local levels, and ensuring effective implementation of WIA youth programs in California. To continue to facilitate youth involvement, we are moving forward with support for the Youth Voice Network to provide a vehicle for engaging a broad range of California's youth in the work of the Council. The Youth Voice Network will meet outside of State Youth Council meetings to allow youth members of the Council to participate actively in the State and Local work groups. Dr. Ayala presented the Leadership Team report as a set of recommendations, which were accepted by the Council.

Ms. Cepeda stated that input from youth tends to be real and practical, while work plans tend to lean toward administrative policy and to appear intangible. She stated that making the transition from policy to program or fieldwork is difficult and that a need exists to make the two fit together. Dr. Ayala asked the members to adjourn for lunch and to consider, which of the two work groups they would prefer to participate in when the meeting resumed after lunch.

The Council reconvened after lunch to discuss the Council's work plan for fiscal year 2003-04.

SYC 2003-04 Work Plan

State and local priorities were identified and SYC members selected the work group on which they wished to serve. With the assistance of SYC staff, Mr. Trippe and Ms. Porter facilitated the breakout discussions. A copy of the revised work plan will be provided to all Council members.

State Youth Marketing Campaign – Plan and Campaign for California’s Youth

Mr. Trippe indicated the need to build awareness and a funding framework for youth related services and resources. He agreed to seek more information from other states and provide a summary to the Council of the information he gathers. He emphasized the need to work closely with the Forum for Youth Involvement in building a campaign for youth.

Mr. Trippe said that the role of the marketing campaign would be to develop a framework for youth services and activities and to build statewide awareness. It would also serve as a way to fully engage youth and to offer a more coherent and integrated system. Mr. Hanson stated his concern for troubled youth and the lack of financial incentives to work with and provide services for at-risk youth. Ms. Myeshia Grice said much of the disconnection is evidenced by the fact that many local youth councils aren’t aware of what the SYC is doing.

In closing, Ms. Cepeda observed that the reason she volunteered to work with the Local Issues Work Group is that she believes people are becoming more and more disenchanted with the thought of turning to the federal government for help, and that the Council should consider developing a tool kit for young people that will keep its message consistent. Mr. Rattray said that while it is hard to support work groups dealing with multiple issues, he is willing to make the effort.

The next SYC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 20, 2003. It will be held in conjunction with the presentation of the Architect of Change Award, with the specific meeting location still to be determined. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.